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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 GEORGETOWN 000607

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PORT OF SPAIN ALSO FOR DEA AND A/LEGATT  
CARACAS ALSO FOR A/LEGATT AND DATT  
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/18/2032  
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PINR](#) [KCRM](#) [KCOR](#) [GY](#)  
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT THREATENED BY ANOTHER DRUG SCANDAL;  
SAYS IT WANTS USG HELP

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Michael D. Thomas, Reason 1.4 (b)  
) and (d)

#### Summary

1. (C) The GoG is threatened with yet another narco-trafficking scandal. An anonymous letter to the Commissioner of Police threatens to release audio and video surveillance recordings that link government and PPP figures to cocaine trafficking unless the Commissioner removes a corrupt senior police officer. The author asserts the officer is assisting one side in the power struggle to take over Roger Khan's narco-terrorist empire. A DVD enclosed with the letter apparently features audio and video surveillance recordings linking the corrupt officer and the son-in-law of the PPP's co-founder to a 200kg, US\$710,000 cocaine deal gone sour.

2. (S) Head of the Presidential Secretariat Roger Luncheon is using the crisis to reassert his personal authority over national security matters and is likely preparing a public relations strategy that once again will blame Guyana's failure to act against well-known cocaine smugglers on the lack of US and UK assistance. However, Luncheon's level of concern suggests he is worried about more than a scandal implicating the family of a once important politician. Guyana's cognoscenti assume the Roger Khan organization has recordings implicating President Jagdeo and other senior figures in illicit activity and eagerly await their presumed release during Khan's upcoming trial. The Presidential Secretariat seems to fear that those tapes may be coming

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public sooner than they feared.  
End Summary.

3. (U) Roger Luncheon, who is simultaneously Head of the Presidential Secretariat, Secretary of the Defense Board, Cabinet Secretary, and a long-time Executive Committee member of the ruling People's Progressive Party, convoked Charge the morning of June 18 on what he said was a matter of great urgency that he could not discuss on the phone.

Government threatened with another drug scandal

4. (C) When Charge arrived at the Office of the President, Luncheon had him read 23 pages of documents including a seven

page anonymous letter to acting Commissioner of Police Henry Greene containing allegations against Senior Superintendent of Police Steve Merai. (Note: the notoriously corrupt Merai was commander of the Target Special Squad (TSS). Merai and the TSS were involved in extra-judicial killings dating back to the early 1990s. Later the TSS acted as enforcer for corrupt U.S. Vice Consul Thomas Carroll's visa selling ring. After it was disbanded in 2002, many TSS officers ended up in the formal employ of narco-trafficker and "phantom" death squad leader Roger Khan. End Note.)

15. (C) The principal motivation of the letter seems to be displeasure that Merai is assisting Venezuelan-based Guyanese narco-trafficker Maxwell "Lunkie" Melville in his struggle with Mark De Abreu to take control of Roger Khan's narco-trafficking empire. The letter refers to a DVD audio and video recording (labeled #4 of 11) that purportedly implicates Merai, "Lunkie", and an unnamed businessman in a 200kg, US\$710,000 cocaine transaction gone bad. Luncheon volunteered to Charge that the businessman purportedly captured on DVD is the son-in-law of Ashton Chase, revered as co-founder of the PPP along with Cheddi and Janet Jagan.

16. (C) The letter's author seeks the Commissioner's commitment by 12:30 p.m. June 18 that Merai will be dismissed from the police force. The author promises that he will hand over originals and all copies of audio and video recordings with evidence of Merai's corrupt activities after Merai is dismissed and threatens, "Your swift action is necessary to avoid implicating other persons publicly and allowing a potentially explosive situation to escalate.... It can be proven as well from video and audiotape recordings that Merai claims the Commissioner of Police and the Minister of Home Affairs are his protectors." The threat is made more serious by allegations in the letter that three persons arrested in

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May with 106.5 kg cocaine have "strong connections to Freedom House" (PPP Headquarters). The letter also refers to the public release last year of secretly taped phone conversations that caused great scandal and forced the retirement of Police Commissioner Winston Felix.

#### Luncheon Taking Charge

17. (C) Before discussing the substance of the letter, Luncheon made three points:

-- After an admitted hiatus due to his stroke, he is now firmly back in power and is the ONLY person in the Government that the Embassy should deal with on National Security matters, including the one at hand.

-- The U.S. and Guyana must "develop an architecture" to end the "asymmetry of information sharing" on national security matters between the two governments. Luncheon understands that the USG has reason to be uncomfortable with some persons in the government. (Note: This is a reference to Luncheon acolyte and acting Commissioner of Police Henry Greene who Jagdeo elevated to his current position immediately after the embassy revoked his visa for benefiting from the proceeds of narco-trafficking). Thus, DCM should work directly with Luncheon to develop this "architecture". If the USG is not able to end the asymmetry in information sharing, Guyana may need to reevaluate which countries it will partner with in security matters, with Cuba being a specific possibility.

-- After the arrest of Roger Khan in mid-2006, the second tier of narco-traffickers is disorganized. "We" should strike against them now. Luncheon noted that, unlike Surinam and Trinidad which have demonstrated an ability to work closely with U.S. law enforcement, "Guyana's constitutional and legal structures are inconvenient" for acting against narco-traffickers. Luncheon, who has repeatedly stated his conviction that in security matters "the ends justify the means" said he is not bothered by legalities, but President

Jagdeo does not feel the same way. Thus, there needs to be consideration of third countries' involvement in action against Guyanese narco-traffickers. Roger Luncheon, personally and exclusively, should be the focal point for those discussions.

#### The Letter

18. (C) Moving to the letter, Luncheon said the GoG is concerned it is about to be enveloped in another tape scandal. Luncheon said the letter had been delivered to Greene late last week by a circuitous route and had been subject of near continuous attention by Luncheon, Home Affairs Minister Rohee, Commissioner Greene, and President Jagdeo since then. Luncheon observed that "everyone" knows he and Greene are close. Thus the author sent the letter to Luncheon knowing that it would be passed to Luncheon and then the President. Luncheon said his government will ask for technical assistance in examining the DVD and if necessary would make public the fact that it had made the request. Luncheon also said that he had called the British to a meeting on the same subject and would make the same request of them.

#### Do They Really Want Our Help?

19. (C) After listening to Luncheon's 45-minute soliloquy, Charge responded that DEA Country Attach resident in Trinidad was due in Guyana this week and volunteered to bring him to Luncheon's office. In a reflexive action, Luncheon pushed himself away from the table on his wheeled chair, raising his hands in the air as he blurted out "Whoa! I'm not going to talk to DEA!" Charge expressed confusion since Luncheon had only moments before sought USG partnership in fighting the narco-trafficking scourge in Guyana. Luncheon back-pedaled and accepted the offer.

#### Some History

110. (C) Before his arrest in Surinam and removal to the U.S., Roger Khan was frequently seen entertaining President Jagdeo

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at social venues around Georgetown. Businessmen tell tales of passing high-level narco-traffickers entering and leaving State House. Luncheon and Greene were deeply involved in liaison with Roger Khan's "Phantom" death squad, which Luncheon privately credits with restoring law and order to Guyana. Most Georgetown cognoscenti believe that Khan has tapes of himself, President Jagdeo, and other senior officials discussing illegal activities. Many believe, and hope, that Khan will use these supposed tapes in his U.S. trial.

111. (C) In 2005 DEA offered to set up a vetted police unit that would gather actionable intelligence in support of Guyanese counter-narcotics operations. Jagdeo told post he had charged Luncheon with ensuring the initiative moved forward. Luncheon proceeded to kill it, although this did not stop him and Jagdeo from repeatedly publicly announcing the supposed opening of a DEA office in Guyana. More recently, Jagdeo and Luncheon deep-sixed the comprehensive, practical, and funded British proposal for security sector reform that would inter alia strengthen police capacity to act against narco-traffickers.

#### Comment

112. (C) As President Jagdeo has noted to Ambassador Robinson, almost everybody in Guyana knows who the major drug traffickers are. Despite this knowledge, Guyanese law enforcement almost never investigate or take action against narco-criminals, senior government officials socialize with notorious drug traffickers, and the president participates in ribbon-cutting ceremonies opening businesses built with drug money. The GoG does not need DEA to point the way. In this environment, it is the lack of political will, rather that

the lack of foreign assistance that impedes progress against narco-trafficking in Guyana.

¶13. (C) When this scandal eventually breaks, Luncheon likely will orchestrate a media strategy blaming the GoG's lack of action against narco-traffickers on the failure of the US and UK to share information and provide equipment, the failure of DEA to open a Guyana office, and the failure of the UK to move forward with the Security Sector Reform project. This will be similar to the GoG's normal response to the annual release of the INCSR. What we cannot predict is how the government and party will react if tapes are released implicating Jagdeo in illicit activities. Luncheon's entreaty for DCM to work with him on creating an "architecture for information sharing" is aimed at ensuring Luncheon personally is the recipient of any derogatory information about government or party members so that he can manage damage control efforts.

#### Next Steps

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¶14. (C) If the GoG does request assistance analyzing the DVD, post will request DEA and/or FBI as appropriate to assist to the extent possible. We will also arrange for a meeting of Luncheon and DEA Country Attach (resident in Trinidad) in which we will seek Luncheon's specific, practical proposals for steps DEA can take within the context of existing working level relationships to support GoG counter-narcotics efforts.

However, the UK has the lead among the donor community on security sector reform and any major DEA initiatives will depend on progress on the UK proposal. As for the architecture for information sharing, it will be informed by President Jagdeo's comment to Ambassador Robinson last week that his government cannot keep any secrets.

Thomas